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**FOUNDATION FOR THE AUTONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE ATLANTIC COAST OF NICARAGUA (FADCANIC)**
Bluefields, South Atlantic Autonomous Region

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAYAC	Community At Risk Youth Advisory Committee
CEAA	Centro Educación Ambiental Agroforestal – Wawashang
EFS	Education For Success
FADCANIC	Foundation for Autonomy and Development of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua
IEEPP	Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas
MIFAN	The Ministry of Families, Adolescents, and Childhood
MINED	Ministry of Education
MOA	Memoranda of Agreement
RAAS	South Atlantic Autonomous Region
REJUB	Red de Emprendedores Juveniles de Bluefields

1– Context

The South Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS) of Nicaragua covers an area of 27,407 km² and has a total population of 346, 722 (INIDE 2008), of which 63% are children and young people under 24 years of age. The region is geographically bounded to the north by the North Atlantic Autonomous Region; south by the San Juan River; east by the Caribbean Sea; and west by the Department of Chontales. The inhabitants are indigenous, afro descendants and mestizos peoples, with distinct languages and cultures, and a reliance on renewable resources and subsistence practices. 60 percent of the population of the RAAS lives in the rural areas.

36.2

percent of total population
in the RAAS, age 10-24.

The Autonomous regions of Nicaragua have the highest proportion of young population compared to the rest of the country. This is significant, because it means that the Caribbean regions, like Nicaragua and most of Latin America and the Caribbean are undergoing a phase of demographic transition, known as the “youth bulge”¹ which offers a historic development opportunity in the next twenty year.

According to a 2012 study by FADCANIC/USAID on Social Economic Situation of children and Young People in Five Municipalities of the RAAS, the Demographic bonus is not guaranteed, 3 of each 10 young people ages 15 to 24 have not completed primary education. 4 of each 10 have not completed Secondary Education. Only 6 in 100 have entered the labor market in the area of agriculture and domestic services. 43 in 100 have never worked.

The context in which young people live and attempt to thrive in the RAAS is characterized by multiple risk factors that contribute to their acute level of vulnerability. According to EFS 2012 base line study, the principal risk factors are: teen pregnancy, frequent consumption of alcohol, child labor, family and community violence and low levels of schooling.

Development planning should prioritize public education and allocate at least 7% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)² to this sector over the next 10 years in order to achieve

¹ Youth Bulge is the working age population that will continue to grow more quickly than the dependent population that is of school-age or retirement age. In this situation there is a higher proportion of the populations at ages to work invest, save and produce.

² See “7% del PIB a Educación nos sacará de la pobreza,” *El Nuevo Diario* 12 March 2010.

basic education goals. If Nicaragua does not invest in education now it will be too late. (Adolfo Acevedo, *Coordinadora Civil*),

Education

According to MINED's Education Sector Strategy (2011-2015), students on the Caribbean Coast do not have adequate access to the educational system and, even when accessing educational opportunities, often are not completing primary school.

49,565

MINED, RAAS 2013 Initial
registration

The Regional Autonomous Education System in the RAAS encounter challenges such as, low access to quality educational opportunities, pertinence, high overage student population, disrupt routine school activities, low promotion and high drop-out rates. The 2012 study by the Instituto de *Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas* (IEEPP)³ on primary education in

Nicaragua shows that the education system loses most of its rural students in the first three grades and only 32 out of every 100 students that start primary school complete the sixth grade; besides the RAAS has the highest school drop-out rate in the entire country. Seventeen percent of those who begin primary school and more than 20 percent of those who begin the first cycle of secondary leave school. According to the latest World Bank "Report on Poverty" in Nicaragua, people who have not completed secondary education, that is, those with less than 11 years of schooling, are almost certainly condemned to a life below the poverty threshold.

Of the 49 565 students enrolled in school this year in the RAAS, only 46 430⁴ remained, for a **94%** retention rate and 38 421 passed all subjects, for an **83%** promotion rate.

Poverty

Caribbean Nicaragua has the highest poverty level of the country. Twelve of the 25 poorest municipalities of Nicaragua are in the RAAN and RAAS, 28.2% of the urban population of this area live on less than \$1.00 dollar a day, while 68% of the rural population is considered extremely poor. An additional factor that aggravates

³ *La Educación Primaria en Nicaragua: Condiciones que Favorecen u Obstaculizan el Aumento de la Matrícula, la Retención y la Promoción Escolar. IEEPP. (2012)*

⁴ Estadísticas MINED, RAAS primer semestre 2013.

marginalization of the region is the limited road infrastructure, communications, energy, education and health services (70.9% and 63.1% respectively, INIDE, 2005).

An analysis of the structure of the labor market in Nicaragua shows that some 65% of employment is accounted for by the self-employed or people who work in small economic units be individual or family, urban or rural. The working age population increase in the country's history could potentially provide an opportunity to reduce poverty levels within a relatively short time, but this opportunity is not being seized. First, because most young people who reach working age have very low levels of schooling, which condemns them to poor quality jobs, second, because only 53% of the working age population are actually in the labor market, owing to the very low level of female labor force participation. (Adolfo Acevedo, Coordinadora Civil),

The Factors that hinder the effective labor insertion of the youth in the RAAS	
Structural Aspects	Contextual Aspects
The role of the Regional Government and Regional Council who are employers, and have not facilitated the investment.	Education has been from the beginning one of the main activities, in the enterprise, that imposes a constraint for the insertion of youth to the labor market.
Low availability of Jobs with satisfactory wages.	Lack of experience, leadership, and motivation of the youth.
Lack of industries and business organization for the generation of new Jobs.	Little appreciation of the youth of our region to aspire to a technical career, most prefer to graduate from high school.
At an institutional level, the poor support and inter institutional coordination represent a restriction.	Among the young women there is a large number of unplanned pregnancies.
Lack of follow up to programs of formation and technical training.	Political requirements requested by public organizations
Lack of funding.	Low inclusion of women in non-traditional workspaces within the municipality.

Teen Pregnancy

The factors that make it easy for a teenager to get pregnant are in the following order physical, psychological, social and cultural:

- Poor preparation and knowledge of her body in order to assume her sexuality.
- No knowledge of the use and how-to get birth control methods
- Emotional immaturity is an obstacle for the analysis of the consequences of their acts.
- Fear to be alone
- Possibility of feeling like an adult
- Lack of affection
- The need to affirm her womanhood
- Inadequate relation and communication with parents
- Sexual curiosity
- Search for Independence

Pregnancy rates in the South Atlantic Autonomous Region are one of the highest in the country, with 3.9 children per woman. It also reflects the highest rates of maternal death. Adolescent pregnancy remains high throughout Nicaragua and the RAAS is one of the departments with the highest rates in the country. The majority of these adolescent mothers suffer social exclusion and poverty, if teenagers continue to become pregnant the generation transmission of poverty in the region will continue, and there will be no development; hence comes the importance of promoting Reproductive and Sexual Health and Reproductive and Sexual Rights. (CRAAS/GRAAS/UNFPA/ VOZ JOVEN PROGRAM Nov. 2011)

The reports of Dr. Mario Mendez, director of the Ministry of Health in the municipality of Bluefields, last year there were 52 pregnant teens in Bluefields (age 10-17 years) and from January to May 2013 we already have 28. The expectation is that the number of cases of teen pregnancy this year will surpass the 2012 rates.

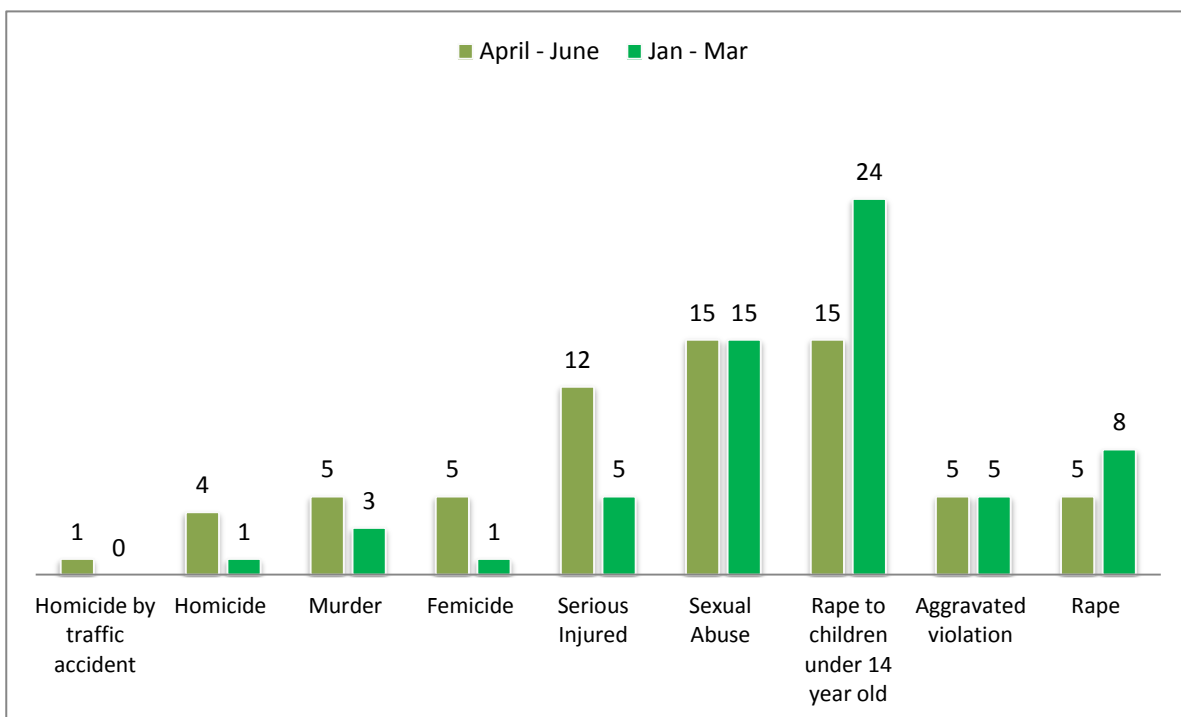
The Ministry of Families, Adolescents, and Childhood (MIFAN) is currently in the process of building a new model of attention that incorporates existing programs within an approach that includes promotion, prevention, integrated care, special protection. The principal focus will be the family and the community and the objective to promote healthy behaviors, values, new child-rearing strategies and family relations guidelines, as well as risk prevention and internal and external referral services.

Security in the RAAS

Nicaragua's 2006-2007 Demographic and Health Survey, reports 92% of all women surveyed in the RAAS reported having been physically abused by their husband or ex-husband. In addition, the Autonomous Regions were largely responsible for the country's 31% increase in cases of reported rape between 1998 and 2009.

In 2012 USAID commissioned the Assessment of Security and Crime Prevention Activities, with a Focus on Youth at Risk on the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua", which identified 24 groups mostly composed of at-risk young men in the RAAS that often commit armed robbery, carry home-made weapons, and are occasionally arrested for aggravated assault. These trends are indicative of the deeper development challenges the region faces.

Graph 1. Incidence of Serious Crime Reported to the National Police in the RAAS, January -June 2013



2- Key Accomplishments

During this FY 2013 the EFS team focused on setting conditions for the expansion and extension of the program, building strategies, defining indicators, identifying and building new partnerships and networks in support of at risk youth, and has achieved the following:

- The expansion and extension of the EFS program to two new municipalities and 16 communities of the RAAS, providing a more holistic offer of educational alternatives and support system to youth and their families. The implementation of a new selection process has led to better target program recipients. Thanks to the engagement of a bigger number of community volunteers, leaders and individuals in support of at risk children and young people, EFS has taken the initiative to help youth make a difference in their lives and become contributing members of their communities.
- The EFS 2013 baseline Study is completed and validated. This study has contributed to a better understanding and a clear perspective of the context of vulnerability and risk young people are facing and will better measure and determine the impact the program is making in the target areas.
- With the support of AIR, EFS have designed and installed an online Data Base Information System that is in an advanced pilot phase, producing outputs, using existing beneficiaries' data in the five targeted municipalities. This system has proven to be a sturdy and very useful management tool.
- For the first time the EFS program has a comprehensive and updated on line M&E System with access to accurate and timely information along with the possibility of multiple crossing of variables and the capacity to track each program beneficiary individually that better measures both the quantitative data and the desired changes of youth at risk, CAYACS performance, and the effectiveness of the program implementation in the communities.

- The single most important achievement of the **Communication and Visibility** work has been the initiation of a process for establishing a communication and public advocacy strategy Throughout the fiscal year, EFS Communication and Visibility has provided consistent internal support to ensure a high media profile of major program events such as the February launch of EFS expansion in Corn Island which was attended by USAID Nicaragua Director Arthur Brown and the Graduation Ceremony and Exhibition of EFS Short Vocational Courses attended by US Ambassador Phyllis Powers in July 2013.

- The development of "FADCANIC's **Policy and Institutional Regulation for the Protection of Children, Adolescents and Youth**, which was done in an inclusive participatory way with EFS staff, under the guidance of *Dos Generaciones*, an organization with broad experience and expertise in this field. This policy for working with youth has increased the capacity of the organization to protect the rights and assure due care while working with youth. For the Staff this was an avenue to identify risk factors and protective factors in our work places, to express commitment, but also to deconstruct concepts and other social representations on the subject of children, rights and violence.

- The design of the mechanisms by which the life skills program will be delivered by the EFS program. The curriculum focuses on building self-esteem, assertive communication, decision making, and life plans. We began to apply the curriculum already in its validation phase through the training of 241 youth peer mentors, self-selected to facilitate life skills sessions with other young people both in and out the program.

3. Providing Access to Formal Education Elementary and Secondary Scholarships

Outcomes

- Enroll children and young people who are out of school
- Provide alternatives for over-age students in elementary school
- Improve learning outcomes (reading, writing, and study skills) for all students
- Strengthen life skills
- Provide technical skills, workforce development

817

EFS 2013 program recipients age 10-24.

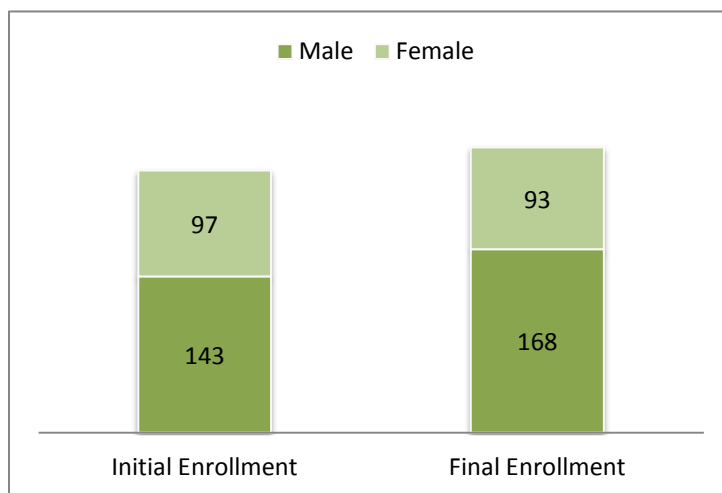
Education for Success continues to increase access to quality education for children and youth living in violence-prone urban neighborhoods and isolated afro-descendant and indigenous communities in five municipalities of the RAAS.

In 2013, EFS directly attended 817 learners aged 10 to 24 in primary, lower secondary school, and technical vocational training. Of these, roughly one third are ethnic Miskito, Rama or Ulwa (33%), one third Creole or Garifuna (35%), and one third Mestizo (32%).

The program served 541 primary and secondary learners. In the RAAS girls tend to outperform boys in school so EFS makes a special effort to reach boys especially in primary. At the beginning of the school year, the program enrolled 143 boys and 97 girls in elementary school. (**Graph 2.**)

At the end of the fiscal year (third quarter of the school year), the retention rate was 117 percent for boys and 96 percent for girls. The enrollment of boys increased in May and July when the accelerated primary program began in Pearl Lagoon and Tasbapauni. (See more on page 13.)

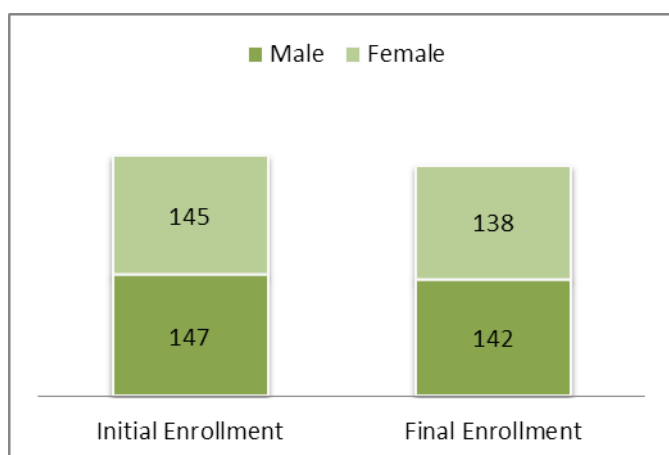
Graph 2. EFS Primary Enrollment by Sex Feb to Sep 2013



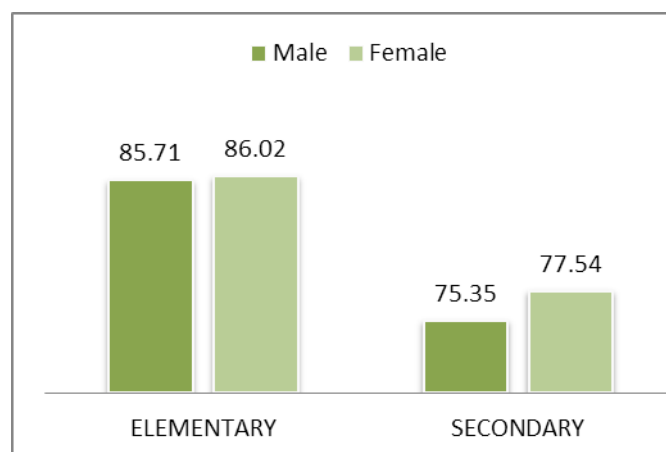
In secondary the program achieved virtual parity in enrollment of boys and girls. **(Graph3.)** The retention rate for secondary was of 96% in comparison to 88 percent for total secondary school population in seven municipalities⁵ as reported by MINED.

During the first semester of the school year, of 541 EFS students in primary and secondary 88 percent passed all subjects as compared to 83 percent for the entire RAAS school population as reported by MINED.

**Graph 3. EFS Secondary Enrollment by Sex
Feb to Sep 2013**



Graph 4. Percentage of EFS Primary and Secondary Scholarship Recipients Who Passed All Subjects - Feb to Sep 2013



EFS addresses major barriers to quality learning through accelerated primary options, teacher training, after school tutoring, psychosocial counseling, life skills training, and parent education.

Accelerated Primary

Working in partnership with the Delegation of the Ministry of Education, the EFS accelerated primary program is delivered in two schools in Pearl Lagoon municipality. It offers young people who have dropped out of school by third grade, a flexible curriculum to re-engage with their education and obtain a sixth grade certificate.

⁵ Bluefields,,Kukra Hill, Pearl Lagoon, Desembocadura, Corn Island, La cruz and El Tortuguero, II corte evaluativo 2013 MINED, RAAS.

79

2013 EFS scholarship recipients returned to school after dropping out for periods extending from six months to four years. 55 of these are boys and 35 are in accelerated primary program.

The program is six months long and it covers the core subjects of Math, English, Spanish, and Life Skills in daily five-hour sessions.

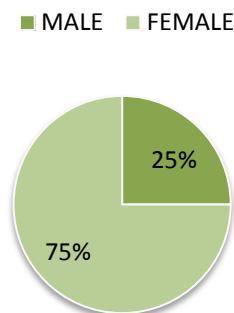
This year 35 youth are attending these classes; 27 boys and 8 girls. These young people have an average age of 17 years and have been out of school for periods of up to four years. Of the 35, 18 youth are currently enrolled in the community of Tasbapauni where EFS offered the accelerated primary program for the first time. The other 17 are enrolled in Pearl Lagoon town where the program is running for three consecutive years now.

Teachers Training

This year EFS trained 68 teachers from 16 schools in Kukra Hill, Corn Island, and FADCANIC's Wawashang Agroforestry and Environmental Education Center. Teachers don't always recognize and give enough attention to children with learning difficulties. They don't know how to cope with children and young people with behavior and learning issues. EFS teacher training focused on adolescent development, life skills, social emotional learning, and development of innovative learning materials.

The program also provides reference books and teaching supplies to all the schools attending EFS students twice a year.

Graph 5. Rate of Male to Female Teachers Trained by EFS FY2013



159

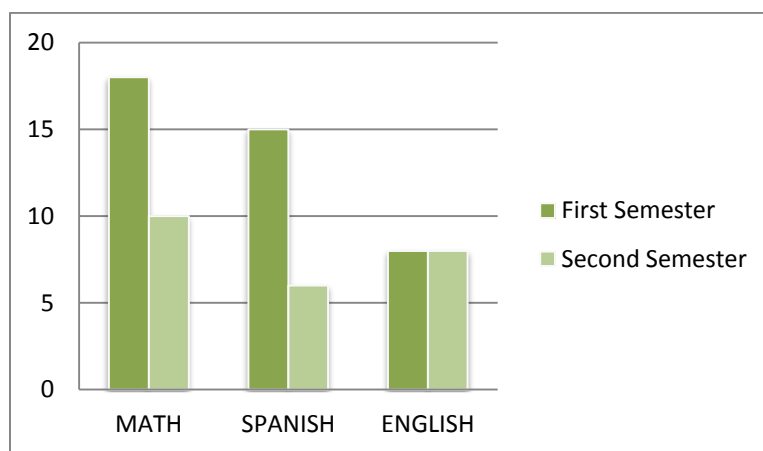
EFS scholarship recipients received reinforcement classes in core subjects of Math, English and Spanish. 70 are girls and 89 boys.

After School Tutoring

EFS primary students who are having learning difficulties in Math, Spanish and English are tutored twice a week by their homeroom teachers. Secondary students are also tutored in these subjects during after school sessions conducted by peer mentors. This year, 42 primary and 117 secondary EFS students were tutored.

The effect of this coaching is illustrated in Graph 3. At the end of the first semester of the school term, 41 primary and secondary students were failing Math, English or Spanish. By September 30, after the first exams of the second semester, the number of EFS students failing Math had been reduced by 55 percent. Students failing Spanish also had a significant reduction of 40 percent and there was no variation in the number of students failing English.

Graph 6. Number of EFS Scholarship Recipients Failing Math, Spanish and English – Feb to Sep 2013



In 2014 the tutoring is going to be extended to all subject matters with which students are having difficulty since the overall performance of EFS students is also being impacted negatively by poor grades in Social Sciences, Civism and Physical Education. These last two subjects in particular will benefit from more consistent and targeted work in life skills development.

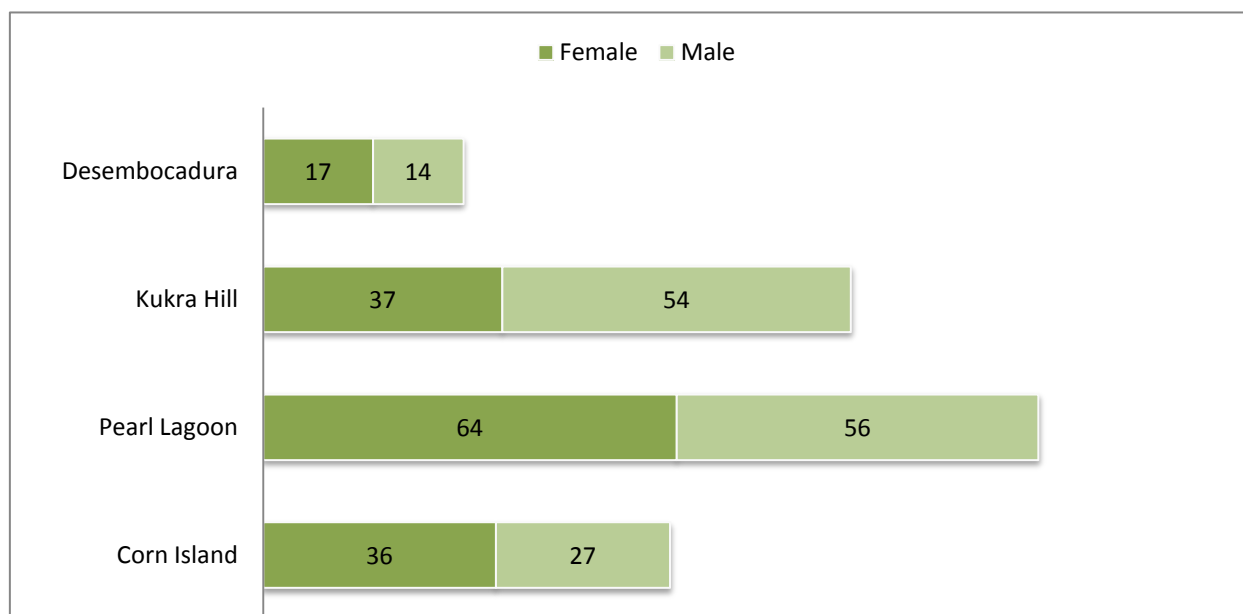
At the same time the program has recognized the need to strengthen and develop strategies to improve reading and writing. According to the results of the 2013 EFS

baseline study presented in August, 41 percent of the children and youth inducted into the program this year say they have difficulties understanding what they read.

Psychosocial Counseling

This year EFS counseled 305 primary and secondary students with learning difficulties derived from behavior and other emotional and mental health issues.

Graph 7. Number of Primary and Secondary Students Receiving Individual EFS Counseling FY 2013



Note: Includes 33 non-EFS primary and secondary students.

There were almost as many boys (151) as girls (154) in counseling. As shown in Graph 7, the largest amount of young people in counseling was registered in the municipality of Pearl Lagoon (39%), which also includes students in the territory of Wawashang.

The second largest amount of young people who received counseling this year is in Kukra Hill. Among these 91 Kukra Hill students, 46 percent had a positive behavior change.

In Kukra Hill, EFS started counseling 91 students (37 girls and 54 boys) at the beginning of the school year. 71 of these students were presenting "behavior problems" in class. By the second semester this number has been reduced to 36. The other 20 students were having issues with tardiness and among these 13 are now more punctual and assiduous in class.

Besides this individual counseling, EFS reached another 76 students in group counseling sessions addressing cross cutting issues like teenage pregnancy, gender based violence and environmental health.

Good Parenting

513

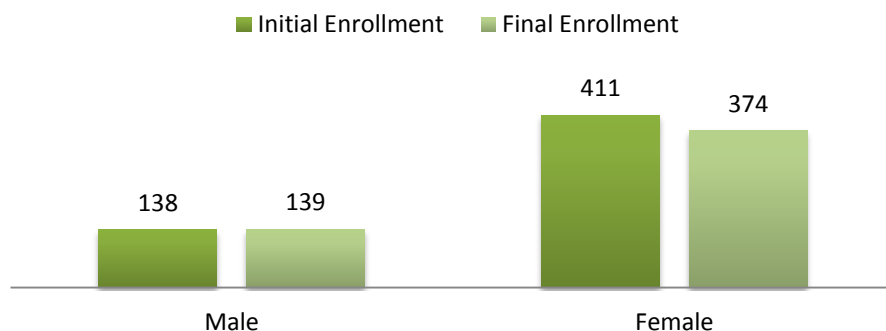
Adult and teen mothers, fathers, and other primary caregivers in the family attending EFS good parenting training. 139 are men

Through the good parenting education program which EFS launched this year, 513 mothers, fathers, and teen parents are also learning to stimulate their children's motivation to learn and to support their educational success. We are trying to get parents to value education and support the attendance of their children to school, especially as it relates to the amount of work that the children have to do to help the family income.

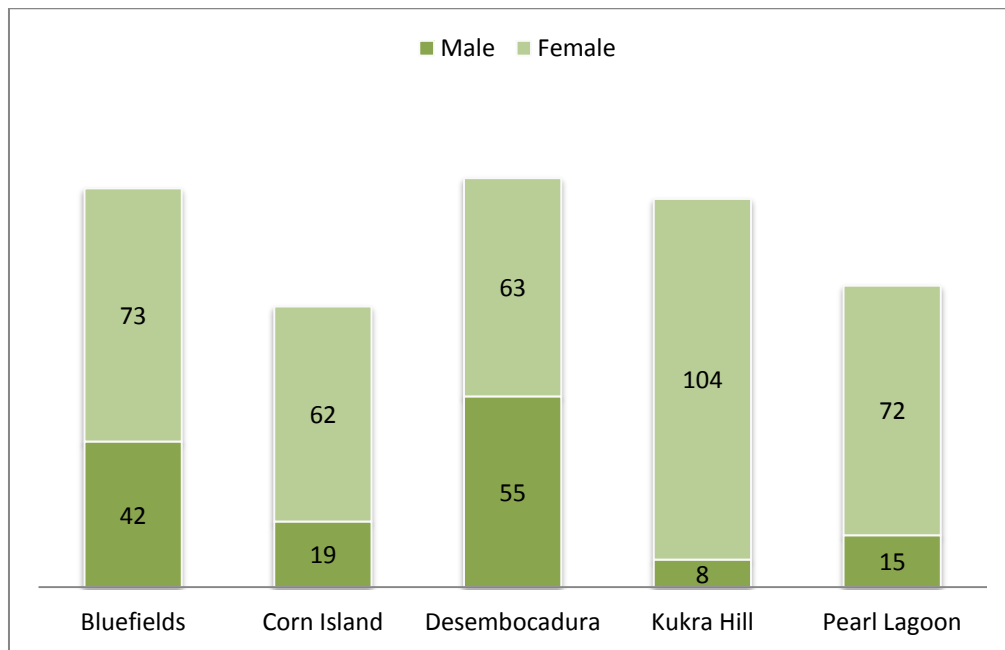
EFS parent training is also geared to provide the skills needed to reduce violent forms of rearing children and developing the character of young people.

This year the program delivered 63 half day workshops in 16 communities. These workshops covered a course of five topics delivered on a monthly basis. Of the 549 amount of parents who started the course in the month of April, the program retained 93 percent by September. (**Graph 8.**) The majority of the parents in EFS training are found in the municipality of Desembocadura (23%) followed closely by Bluefields (22%) and Kukra Hill (20%). There are almost three mothers for every father in the training. (**Graph 9.**) In the context where child rearing is considered to be an exclusive domain of the mothers and where men seldom participate in any activity that is related to the education of their children, it is an achievement of EFS that we didn't lose any of the fathers but rather gained one.

Graph 8. Initial and Final Enrollment of EFS Good Parenting Training – April to September FY 2013.



Graph 9. Number of Participants in EFS Good Parenting Training by Sex and Municipality – September 2013.



The program is already seeing evidence of parents paying more attention to what their children are doing in class, helping them to do their homework and, in general, being more aware of how their own behavior as parents can be linked to the problems their children are having in school. As noted above, the program is also sensitive to the fact that the large number of parents with low literacy skills is a big hindrance to both their confidence in helping their children with their homework and participating more actively in their schools. In 2014, EFS parents with low literacy will be referred to the **Yo Si Puedo** national adult literacy program and other community based initiatives, to improve reading skills of children and youth.

4. Providing Access to Non Formal Education: Short Vocational Courses

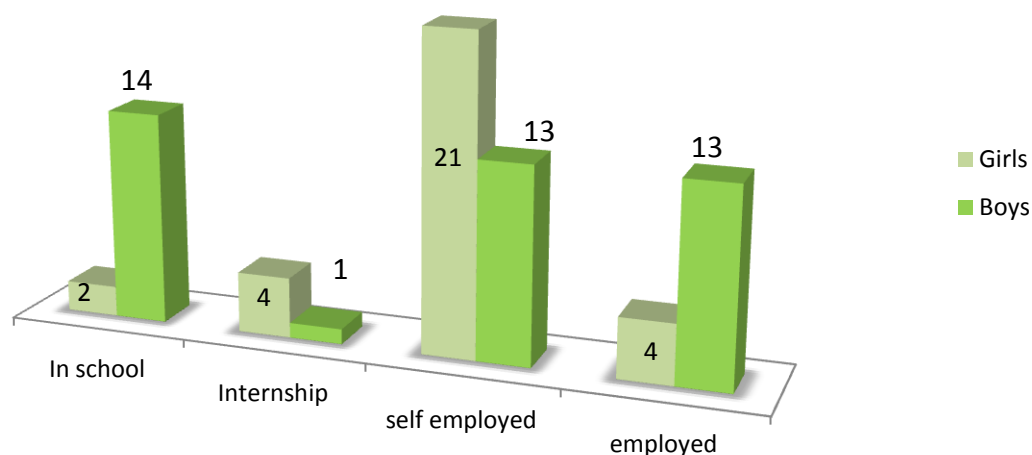
EFS short vocational courses are part of the program's strategy to provide technical knowledge and life skills to out of school youth.

This year the program delivered 20 vocational courses in the five municipalities. Three hundred and sixteen (316) young people enrolled. Of these, 276 completed the training and they represent 34 percent of the 816 children and youth directly supported by the program throughout the fiscal year.

Among those who completed EFS short vocational training, 72 are employed, self-employed, in training or have gone back to school. The 17 in employment are working in call centers in Managua, at the African palm Kukra Development Company, restaurants in Bluefield, and Global Communities NGO and traffic police in Corn Island.

The 34 who are currently self-employed are in cell phone repair, bakery, beauty care, farming, or fishing. The five in training are in intern or apprenticeships in restaurants and beauty salons in Bluefields, construction and painting work in Pearl Lagoon.

Graph 10. EFS 2013 Vocational Course Participants Currently in Education, Internship or Employment- September 2013



5. Life Skills Program

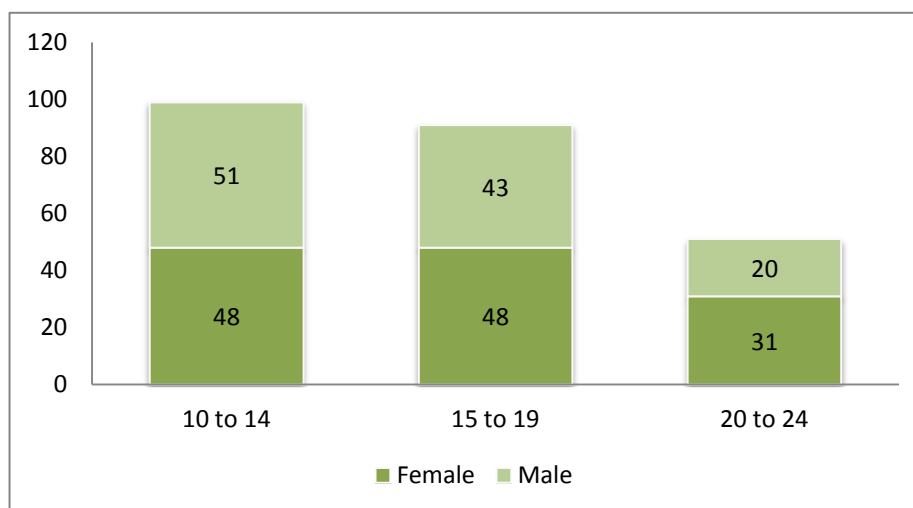
This year EFS assumed the challenge of strengthening processes for children and youth empowerment by putting greater emphasis on life skills education. In July the EFS Life skills curriculum was finalized. It was developed over a period of six months with the technical assistance of American Institutes for Research (AIR) and it involved broad consultations of young people, parents, teachers, and EFS staff and volunteers in the five municipalities.

The curriculum focuses on building self-esteem, assertive communication, decision making, and life plans. We began to apply the curriculum already in its validation phase through the training of 241 youth peer mentors, self-selected to facilitate life skills sessions with other young people both in and out the program.

Graph 10 shows the distribution of the young people who started to receive training in peer mentorship during the second quarter fiscal year. Of the 241, 53 percent are girls and over two thirds are between the ages of 10 to 19.

At the end of the fiscal year, 134 primary, secondary and short vocational scholarship recipients continue in peer mentoring training. This is just over half of those who started the training in January, but still 40 more young people than the goal set for 2013 of 90 students trained in peer mentorship.

Graph 10. Number of EFS Youth Mentors Trained in 2013 by Age Group



This year EFS also advanced in setting up the structure to strengthen life skills education through community based sports practice and music and artistic education. The program recruited and trained 111 volunteer coaches and instructors 74 percent of whom are women.

Sports Practice

In April the sports program began in Bluefields, with weekly training in baseball, indoor soccer, football and volleyball at three locations: Escuela Normal in Barrio Loma Fresca, and INATEC and Cristobal Colon Institute in Barrio Fatima. Sixty-eight EFS children and youth are attending the sports program in Bluefields. In Rama Cay, which is one of the two extension communities in the municipality of Bluefields where EFS began to operate this year, the sports program started in May. There, all 18 EFS scholarship recipients attend weekly football and volleyball practice.

In Corn Island the sports program began in July and it includes baseball and football. Here games are also held on a weekly basis, with regular attendance of 41 EFS participants on both islands.

In Desembocadura de Rio Grande the sports program began in April. It covers baseball, softball and football. It is being delivered in the five EFS communities in this municipality. Forty primary, secondary and vocational scholarship recipients are attending.

Music and Arts Education

In 2013, EFS organized five mural arts workshops, three were held in the municipality in Bluefields, one in Corn Island and one in Desembocadura de Rio Grande. The mural arts workshops were delivered in partnership with messages. Murales RAAS and they involve the young people in beautifying their school walls with life skills and environmental health messages.

In the city of Bluefields, El Bluff and Rama Cay, 60 children and young people attended mural arts workshops. In Corn Island, 18 young people participated and in Desembocadura, 20.

The music program has also begun in Desembocadura de Rio Grande. Twenty four children and youth from the five communities are attending guitar, piano and choir practice two times a week.

6. EFS Communication and Visibility

The single most important achievement of the Communication and Visibility work has been the initiation of a process for establishing a communication and public advocacy strategy.

During the first two years of implementation 98 percent of the 615 children and youth EFS attended in primary and secondary school passed their grades. Among the 401 out of school and out of work youth who participated in EFS vocational training, 24 percent had gained a job related to the program's training. Education for Success was being successful in its mission, but not paying much attention to promoting itself.

Building communication capacity for EFS and across FADCANIC became a priority for the 2013 -2017 expansion period. The fiscal year began with the establishment of a dedicated EFS communication unit comprised of two professional staff to provide day-to-day communications support. Through American Institutes for Research, which assisted FADCANIC institutional strengthening, a study on youth knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and practices was commissioned to inform the design of EFS strategic communication and advocacy.

This study, known as ECCAP for its acronym in Spanish, was completed at the end of August 2013. The communications and advocacy strategy formulation process began in September and should be finalized in 2014.

The strategy will drive a more sharply articulated FADCANIC agenda for the growth and development of youth that is founded on young people's vision of the development of the region and on their own appreciation of what are the best opportunities available for them.

It also aims to ensure that FADCANIC meets its own objective of being a knowledge leader for Caribbean Nicaragua children and youth by leveraging different communication platforms to engage and promote participation and advocacy of all sectors of Caribbean society.

Listen Up Youth Radio

One first such platform is the "Listen Up" radio program which had its inaugural transmission September 2013 in the municipality of Pearl Lagoon. Listen Up is a

monthly one-hour show made for youth by youth who want to make a difference in their communities through media-based information, education, and entertainment.

Listen Up Pearl Lagoon is broadcast free of cost on Radio Caribbean Pearl with sponsorship from the Municipal Government of Pearl Lagoon. The Program reaches all communities in the basin and it includes Education for Success and other local news, opinion surveys on issues affecting youth, interviews with local talents, music, games, and a call-in segment to stimulate and gauge public participation.

The radio program was nine-months in the making as it is the strategic output of radio and video training that EFS delivered to Pearl Lagoon out of school youth and school-based youth mentors through weeklong modules in January, June, and September 2013.

The hands-on course familiarized youth with multiple media technologies, stressed teamwork, creativity, self-esteem and critical thinking, and gave them the knowledge and tools to produce spots, fictional drama, interviews and news reports.

Twenty-two young people attended the course and of these, 12 are now actively involved in producing *Listen Up Pearl Lagoon*. They are supported by two local radio workers, both under age 29, who also attended EFS radio and video workshops and continue working with the EFS youth as coaches.

Education for Success provides the youth media production training in partnership with Austrian NGO HORIZONT3000. In June, the video production module was also offered to 14 adolescents in Corn Island and in September, the program held a three-day training of trainers session in Bluefields for eight young video and radio practitioners from URACCAN University Radio, the Regional Government's Bluefields Stereo, and the NGO Acción Médica Cristiana who have volunteered to train and coach new EFS youth communication outfits in all five municipalities where the program operates.

As part of this process, the Regional Secretariat of Youth is making available its computer training center for EFS media training, completely free of cost. In Bluefields, the Regional Government has also pledged to provide free access to Bluefields Stereo recording facilities and to sponsor the broadcast of *Listen Up Bluefields* on this radio station.

In the meantime, video spots on sexual harassment, bullying and drug abuse produced by EFS youth in Pearl Lagoon and Corn Island are being transmitted on Bluefields Creole

TV and can be downloaded from FADCANIC's YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/Fadcanic>.

Key Event Support

Throughout the fiscal year, EFS Communication and Visibility has provided consistent internal support to ensure a media coverage of major program events such as the February EFS Launch in the Municipality of Corn Island which was attended by USAID Nicaragua Director Arthur Brown and the July Graduation Ceremony and Expo Fair of EFS Short Vocational Courses attended by US Ambassador Phyllis Powers.

In the fourth quarter, EFS Communications also provided critical support to the organization of two key events through which FADCANIC is starting to position itself as the lead organization for youth in the region—the Regional Seminar on Youth, Development and Security held in August, and the Workshop on Routes to Comprehensive Care for At Risk Children and Youth in September. (See more in the section on Coordination)

Materials Production and Media Relations

For these and other project activities and special events throughout the year, Communications and Visibility supported the production of 28 different types of informational and promotional materials like radio spots, flyers, posters, banners, outdoors, t-shirts, fact-sheets, folders, notebooks, and bags.

EFS communications also supported the design of activity reports forms and other document templates which are contributing to streamline internal information sharing and increasing consistency in the application of FADCANIC branding and marking requirements across the program.

A new Education for Success logo was especially created to represent the program's holistic approach to child and youth development and its focus on empowering them with the skills that will prepare them for the workplace and for life.

EFS communications contributed to raise awareness of the situation of children and youth and publicized project activities through eight mentions in national print and TV and another eight in regional radio, TV and electronic news casts.

This year, the program also started publishing its own e-bulletin which is linked to EFS stories on FADCANIC website (www.fadcanic.org.ni) where, over the course of the year, we have posted 39 EFS news, agenda notes and publications.

At the same time, we are taking better advantage of social media, with more regular feeds on Facebook and YouTube and new FADCANIC channels on Flick'r and SoundCloud. At the end of the fiscal year, EFS postings on these channels total 41 different items. Our reach on Facebook in particular has evolved from 86 likes in January to 367 in September, with an active weekly engagement of about 30 users age 18-34 in the RAAS.

7. Building Public Private Partnerships

EFS continued to identify and establish agreements with local partners who have taken up their social responsibility to support of children and youth in their communities.

The program signed 12 MOAs with youth organizations, municipal authorities, and private businesses.

The Municipal Government of Desembocadura signed an agreement with EFS to provide birth certificates free of cost so that young who don't have these documents can enroll in the program.

In the municipality of Bluefields, the program signed seven MOAs with beauty salons, restaurant owners, and other food catering that are providing internship opportunities to graduates of EFS vocational courses.

Table 1. FADCANIC Cost Share October 2012 to September 2013

Description	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
FADCANIC's office building in Managua													
FADCANIC's office building in Bluefields													
Auditorium FADCANIC Bluefields													
Wages ██████████ (Carpentry Wawashang)													
██████████ (Carpentry Wawashang)													
██████████ (Carpentry Professor at Wawashang)													
Carpentry shop, machines, and tools													
30% of wages 5 teachers Wawashang													
Use of facilities City Hall Corn Island (Auditorium used for Launching of Program)													
Use of facility for Reading (Rincon de Lectura) Corn Island													
Use of facilities classrooms BICU/ Corn Island													
Volunteer time: time invested by Youth for photo sessions promoting the EFS Program through visibility materials													
Volunteer time Support in Corn Island													
Volunteer time CAYAC													
Donation Sports Supplies Bobby Grant (Grant Sports Supplies)													
Funds for expansion and improvement of Facilities of the Center for Environment and agroforestry Technical Education (CETAA), Wawashang -RAAS													
Total Cost Share FY 2013													

8. Coordination Strategies

August 20 through 22 in Bluefields, Education for Success held the Regional Seminar on Youth, Development and Security to share results of the studies it commissioned this year and to discuss the social, educational, and job outlook for youth, based on these and other recent national and regional research on youth violence and citizen security.

The seminar convened some 80 participants over the three-day program, among which 14 representatives of the Communal, Territorial and Municipal Governments belonging to the five municipalities where EFS operates, and eight representatives respectively of the Regional Government, Regional Council, Regional Secretariats of Youth, Women, and Education, and Regional Delegation of the Ministry of Labor.

During the seminar, these authorities heard first-hand testimonies about the difference EFS is making in the lives of children and youth, engaged in dialogue with the youth to hear their demands and aspirations, and assumed specific commitments to support at risk youth.

EFS also reached specific agreements to present the EFS study findings and program responses in special sessions with the full Cabinet of the Regional Government and plenary of the Regional Council.

The dialogue with elected authorities was followed in September by another two-day regional workshop in Bluefields with government and non-government workers from the health, education, welfare and justice sectors.

The event entitled Routes to Comprehensive Care for At Risk Children and Youth in the RAAS counted 55 participants representing the municipal and regional delegations of the Ministry of Education's School Counseling Program, the Ministry of Health's Adolescent Health Program and the Sexual and Reproductive Health Program, the National Police Commissary for Children and Women, the National Police Youth Affairs Division, the Criminal Court of Adolescents, and the Ministry of Family's Child Services. Non-government actors at the event included mental health, drug rehabilitation, and faith-based family counseling services.

During this workshop, participants mapped local, municipal, and regional services for youth and prepared a first draft of a service guide that also describes basic actions that all parents, teachers, community workers and youth themselves can take to respond to

five critical risks children and young people in our region are facing, and the referral routes to access specialized care when required.

A steering committee was installed to finalize the service guide for publication in 2014 and develop a working plan to build a referral system involving all the agencies providing specialized services to youth. The committee is chaired by EFS' public and private partnership specialist. It is integrated by seven regional and municipal focal points among which a representative of the Police Commissary for Children and Women, three from MINED, a faith-based leader, and the coordinator of FADCANIC's gender program.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

During FY 2013, EFS established a monitoring and evaluation system which is going to allow the program to access project data with the accuracy and timeliness needed to track progress and performance.

The M&E system was improved and expanded in order to effectively capture the essence and scope of the program activities, avoid double counting, capture data accurately, register identified risk factors associated with the beneficiary, services received by the beneficiary and track the behavioral changes of the beneficiary observed throughout their period in the program. This system was designed to be able to provide feedback so that management and communities will have quality data to make the necessary corrective measures.

A key aspect of the new EFS M&E system is its capacity to track each program beneficiary individually. Another important feature of the system is its built-in early warning mechanism to alert municipal staff about who is attending or missing the skills-building and support sessions (school, counseling, tutoring, life skills training, sport activities and so on).

M&E Key Achievements

A comprehensive revision and update of the M&E System for the EFS Program, which included:

- a) *Life skill diagnostic tool by age group*. A comprehensive revision and update of the EFS Performance Monitoring Plan, which included the revision of program indicators (23 indicators), beneficiaries registration to avoid double counting participants, measurement of quantitative and qualitative data, tracking of behavioral flow information and data quality assessments.
- b) *Beneficiary selection tool*. An assessment and update of the youth at risk selection criteria was developed in order to ensure that the program is approaching all predefined risk factors in a balanced way.
- c) *EFS Base Line Study*. A baseline study in the target municipalities was carried out April and May 2013. This study has contributed to a better understanding of the real context of youth living in at risk situation in the targeted municipalities.
- d) *Online Database*. An online data base system designed, installed and in an advanced pilot phase, producing outputs using the existing beneficiaries' data. (Elementary, secondary, technical, (sex, ethnicity, age, grade, # sport participants, # life skills, among others).

Advantages of the M&E System

- Quick online access to accurate and timely information along with the possibility of multiple crossing of variables such as sex, ethnicity, age, grade, # sport participants, # life skills, among others).
- Municipality with trained personnel in the input and management of data base system.
- Individual tracking of program beneficiary, volunteers, collaborators and trainers.
- An early warning system, which tracks in school attendance and beneficiaries' participation in counseling, tutoring, interest groups and life skill activities.
- Beneficiaries' information and files in a secured online database.

Challenge of the M&E System

- How data in distant and isolated communities such as Tasbapounie, Rama Cay, Sandy Bay Sirpi, Orinoco, and the other communities where the program is carrying out its activities will upload information to the database at least once a week.

Recommendations

- In order to exploit its capacity and obtain the maximum benefits data must be uploaded weekly, which will require additional work hours assigned to this activity.
- The program is looking into various options. One possibility is purchasing six (6) tablets [REDACTED] approximately and six internet access [REDACTED] to be distributed in the communities where the program is being implemented.

EFS INDICATOR TABLE FY 2013

Indicador	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Percent Complete	Explanation for +10% or -10%
1 Custom: Number of people who have benefited from USG education and WFD opportunities	1398		317	623	154	1094	78%	Strategy and protocols to carry out arts, sports and vocational courses effectively not in place.
3.2.1-14 Number of learners enrolled in USG-supported primary schools or equivalent non-school-based settings	132		112	22	17	151	114%	19 additional youth enrolled in Leveling course in Tasbapauni represents the 14%
3.2.1-14a Number of men	66		76	14	17	107	162%	There is a higher demand of out of school boys in primary education especially for Leveling course.
3.2.1-14b Number of women	66		36	8	0	44	66%	See above
3.2.1-15 Number of learners enrolled in USG-supported secondary schools or equivalent non-school-based settings	165		143	11	0	154	93%	
3.2.1-15a Number of men	83		66	5	0	71	85%	After applying selection criteria tool, boys were found to be in different
3.2.1-15b Number of women	82		77	6	0	83	101%	
2 Custom: Percentage of students enrolled in primary scholarship, who promoted from one grade to the next.	85%			92%	85%	86%	86%	
3 Custom: Percentage of students enrolled in secondary scholarship, who promoted from one grade to the next.	85%			85%	76%	86%	80%	
4 Custom: Number of students who remain in school or course as a result of the program activities.	609		317	138	126	581	95%	
5 Custom: Number of adolescents and youth who participate in interest group (IG) and complete the cycle of life skills training (music, art, sports, others).	609	29		194	314	598	83%	In FY 13 all efforts of the program in this area were geared to build Life skills curriculum and train municipal volunteers

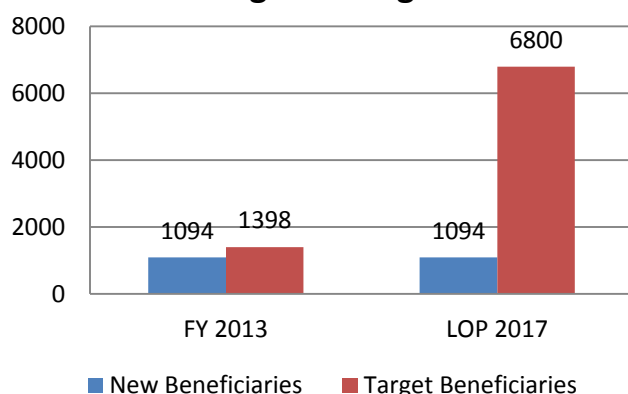
Indicador	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Percent Complete	Explanation for +10% or -10%
4.6.3-5 Number of persons participating in USG-funded WFD programs	420		62	105	109	276	66%	Implementation began in 2 Q. Definition of strategy to deliver vocational courses in process
4.6.3-5 ^a Number of men	210		49	54	60	163	78%	Incomplete target
4.6.3-5b Number of women	210		13	51	49	113	54%	idem
6 Custom: Number of students from WFD programs that further their education within one year of graduation	67			8	17	25	37%	Recipients only have 9 months since graduation.
7 Custom: Number of beneficiaries that improved their attitude to prevent the risk factors affecting them.	502							Life skill program implementation in process. self-evaluation will be carried out in 2014
8 Custom: Percentage of beneficiaries of primary and secondary scholarship attending counseling services through the program.	35%			63%	48%	55%	55%	EFS delivered more groups counseling on cross cutting teams, based on identified needs.
9 Custom: Percentage of beneficiaries of primary and secondary scholarship that receives tutoring services through the program.	35%			14%	27%	21%	21%	EFS began tutoring program ending 1st semester. Students failing Math and Spanish had been reduced.
3.2.1-44: Number of teachers- mentors in USG supported programs trained on how to support learners psychological well being	50				37	37	74%	This FY program haven't been able to engage the teachers in workshops they are involved in other MINED mandatory trainings
4.6.3-2 Number of people gaining employment or better employment as a result of participation in USG- funded WFD program	80				54	54	66%	Access to job opportunities limited in the RAAS. Entrepreneurship skills need to be reinforced.
4.6.3-2 ^a number of men	40				28	28	70%	Target not completed
4.6.3-2b number of women	40				26	26	65%	Target not completed
10 Custom: Number of CAYAC created and operating effectively	3							CAYAC's created and will be trained in 2014 with support of G. Communities.
11 Custom: Percentage of beneficiaries who report changes in their relationship with their parents.	10%							Life skill implementation in process self-evaluation to be in effect 2014

12 Custom: Percentage of youth referred to GBV services (e.g. health, legal, phycho-social counseling shelters	20%							FY 2014
13 Custom: Number of Life Skill trainers trained in gender-appropriate language communication, peaceful conflict resolution and confidence building	25				111	111	444%	Due to dispersion of communities we had to train additional EFS volunteers and instructors.
14 Custom: Number of Parents trained in by program in Good Parenting practices	450			485	513		114%	In Desembocadura both parents took part in the good parenting training Where possible.
15 Custom: Number of radio programs, developed and broadcast by youth on the radio that demands and advocate for their needs.	2				1	1	50%	Youth mentors with limited computer skill for development of radio programs
16 Custom: Amount of community assemblies developed with an agenda geared towards benefiting young people and with their participation.	5			1		1	20%	EFS program staff agreed to prioritize youth assemblies in target municipalities to ensure their participation.
17 Custom: Benefits and opportunities promoted by actors and partners involved in the activities of the program	10				2	2	20%	Fund raising strategy to be developed in 2014
18 Custom: Number and type of contacts established with private and public sector to support the program.	10			8	4	12	120%	Result of Youth Seminar, new contacts have been established
4.6.3-8 Number of WFD initiatives completed as a result of USG participation in public-private partnership	10				9	9	90%	
19 Custom: Number of personnel with improved administrative and programmatic capacity through training processes.	10			3	1	4	40%	FADCANIC began administrative and programmatic training in Q1 of FY 2014
20 Custom: Percentage of budget execution by end of fiscal year	100%	9.3	13.7	19.4	18.0	60.4	61%	In Q1 the main activities were recruitment and procurement. Current budget is for 15 months.
21 Custom: Number of workers trained in Information and Communications Technology, maintenance, English and with the ability to write reports and projects, and make presentations in English	25							FADCANIC began communication and English training in Q1 of FY 2014

11- Accomplishment Against Life of program

The EFS program planned to reach out to 1398 new beneficiaries during the FY 2013. As of September 2013 the program has benefited 1094 new beneficiaries which represent 78% of the FY 2013 target amount and 16% of the life of project target.

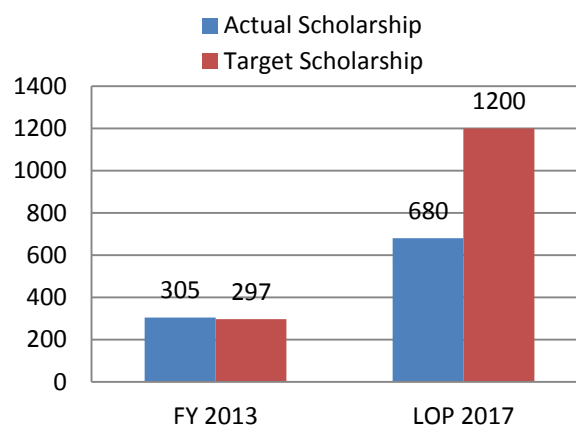
Graph 11. EFS New Beneficiaries Against Target



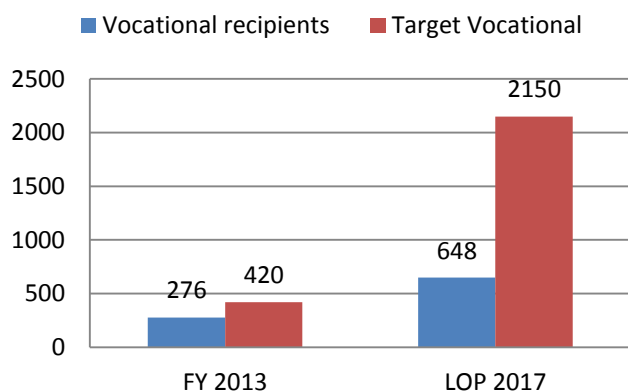
New beneficiaries target for FY 2014 will be 1500. This amount is planned to be achieved through the substantial increase in short vocational courses recipients (445), good parenting (450), sports and fine arts (320), and formal education (285).

In regards to primary scholarships target, 151 new beneficiaries were registered in the program in FY 2013 against the 132 target. This was due to an increasing demand in leveling course in Tasbapouni. In the case of secondary scholarships, the target for FY 2013 was 165 new beneficiaries of which 154 were registered.

Graph 12. EFS Scholarships



Graph 13. Short Vocational Courses



The vocational program target was 420 beneficiaries for FY 2013 of which 276 recipients completed short vocational courses, equivalent to 66% execution.

12- Cross Cutting Theme

Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment

When EFS program started we were working with more boys and we have begun to level out these differences in the secondary education and vocational courses. Gender is one of the cross cutting themes of the Life Skills program, services are gender-focused through recreational spaces where the children, adolescent and youth expressed themselves.

Most boys consider rope games just for girls, and that only girls can hug boys, and that it is not possible for boys to hug boys, because he is then considered gay. But at the end of the workshop after working with the youth we evidenced the difference in their behavior.

Fathers in Good Parenting Workshop, Rama Cay

Getting fathers to come out to the Good Parenting workshop is a challenge. Most fathers believe that workshop is a women thing, so they never attend.

In Rama Cay, a special invitation was sent out to fathers with their names on it, encouraging them to attend and by doing so; we were able to get out 20 fathers to the workshops. This was a chance to address the issue on the new roles of fathers in the home (gender equity). It was difficult getting them to understand that they have to change their practices and be more supportive to their family and not only to stick to their jobs.



One of the ways the EFS Program contributes to the empowerment of women is that of the 83.42% of youth participating in the Interest groups, 52% are women, and this is attributed to the fact that, before, parents would not let their girls participate in extracurricular activities because it was seen as something only for boys. Due to this, the issue of gender equality is also discussed with parents in their spaces, and workshops.

According to studies by UNICEF and Save the Children, for every empowered woman there is an empowered family; we evidence this in the fact that mothers are usually the ones who come to activities of their children and not so much the fathers.

This does not mean that we neglect the men; on the contrary, through our Good Parenting Program more Fathers are getting involved in the life of their children, and are discussing topics of sexism and sexual abuse suffered by women, and children daily.

An initial step have been given through the Referral route event to start having a closer relationship with the Ministry of Health and, in particular, with the sexual reproductive team as early pregnancy is one of the highest risk faced by the youth, and this information must reached the indigenous communities by us or other programs who have presence in these areas. There is also the issue of higher risk of boys to be in alcoholism and violence as well as suffer school failure, and we are paying close attention to these differences.

Example the, topics for Youth Day Celebration were defined with the youth and topics on sexual abuse were evident in the demonstration, in the video production courses, the radio and video spots being published

12. Challenges Faced During FY2013

- Define a program for sports, music, and arts where all program beneficiaries can participate (Life Skills)
- Define action lines for the development of the vocational courses which will be intrinsically linked with the life skill program.
- Establish clear routes to liaise among the components of the EFS program, for the achievement of results and to improve the quality of the services.
- To mobilize the youth population within the ages of 19-24 to take advantage of the opportunities offered. This age group seems to lack of motivation to improve their economic situation.
- The matching role has its limitations as sometimes jobs are found but outside of the competence of the young person or better said not in the field where the person was trained in the vocational course. The limited experience has shown that simply placing people in jobs is not sufficient to keep them there. Follow-up support needs to be strengthened in order to ensure retention and longer term professional growth. Follow up support from CAMAJ and the young entrepreneurs of REJUB, would be very helpful.

- Quick and reliable communication between the main office and the field staff continues to be a challenge. Municipal offices have access to internet service, but not phone services. There is not cultural for horizontal sharing which also impacts the project's in reach and outreach efforts.